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GEOFFREY'S OFFICE DURING THE RAILWAY MANIA.

## GEOFFREY THE GENIUS, AND PERCY THE PLODDER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ARCHIE CAMPBELL."

### CHAPTER VII.

GEOFFREY ARMITAGE had been for more than two years his own master, and during that time many opportunities had occurred of helping others to his own advantage. One of these had arisen from the disappointment betrayed by his late employers, No. 391. 1859.

when he declined their offer of becoming a partner in the house; for he immediately shrewdly suspected that money was an object to them, and

"On this hint he spoke,"

not on the tender topic to which the poet's line alludes, but on one quite as dear to his own heart; and, making the allusion to their circumstances as delicately as possible, ended by putting the inquiry,

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"whether a thousand or two, at that particular juncture, would be at all useful to them?" Although obliged to gulp down shame and vexation, at being treated with familiarity and condescension by one lately in their employ, Messrs. Longsyte and Gatherall "could not but own that the assistance would be most opportune," etc., and therefore willingly signed orders for Geoffrey to receive "goods on arrival," at a sacrifice of fifteen per cent. on what they had been bargained for, and received in return his first cheque for £1000. This species of accommodation was frequently repeated, Geoffrey being nothing loath, for these expected cargoes of merchandise were often resold by him the same day, at a smart profit, without the bills of lading ever being seen by either of the first buyers.

To "Ned Averill," as he was now entitled familiarly to call him, he was the frequent "friend in need," when, by his extravagance or ill luck at the gaming-table, his purse required replenishing; and the "little bill" was "done" for him without delay or remark, which brought cent. per cent. for the accommodation. But these, and such-like transactions, soon become mere trifles, unworthy to be thought of by one who meditated lofty flights and extensive ranges; for a far different and more congenial field of enterprise all at once opened on his admiring view.

The dawn broke of that false glare which people mistook for the coming of a day of universal prosperity, but whose treacherous beams lured hundreds to destruction, and left thousands in darkness and gloom. The wild throbblings began of that moral epidemic which seized alike on peer and plebeian, attacked half the nation, and in so many instances brought ruin and misery in its train. The extraordinary success, and rapid progress in wealth, which had been attained by one or two parties connected with established railways, all at once appeared to offer encouragement, and point examples to all who chose to avail themselves of like opportunities. It was no longer a "guarded way" along which the favoured few pressed towards the glittering fields of fortune; the gates and barriers of rank, age, and sex were removed: no wonder that, in the crush and scramble to get foward, some reeled and tottered, and others fell!

Months rolled on, and the national fever heightened, the national mania raged; all classes were infected by its maddening influence. The advertisements showed, on the lists of provisional directors, peers of the realm side by side with men who before were mere ciphers in society. Shares, involving thousands of pounds, were granted to parties who owned not as many pence; and "Esquire" written after a man's name became so questionable a distinction, as to provoke the witty and satirical definition, that "he was an 'esquire' who owed five hundred pounds." Descriptions which would have been considered ludicrous, but for the consequences left behind, swelled the columns of the daily papers. Men toiled and worked as if for very life, in drawing plans, or measuring and surveying lands; horses galloped with excited clerks, engines tore madly on with still more excited principals, the clergy forgot their sacred calling, mothers forsook their domestic

duties, servants neglected their household cares, shopmen left their legitimate occupation, alike to plunge into the vortex of speculation. But we pause in the description. Abler pens have chronicled the gradual inflation of the monstrous railway bubble, and its sudden and complete collapse, when the seeds of ruin, woe, and desolation enclosed within its giant sphere were poured forth upon the deluded victims of its fleeting colours and unsubstantial form.

Geoffrey Armitage had hastened to take advantage of the encouragement this strange mania offered to his reigning passion. He wrote immediately to his father, and requested him to call on Edward Averill, and recall to his memory the promise made a few years before, to do him a good turn whenever in his power; and, as much with a view to his own future advantage as in requital for what he had already received, the young man exerted his influence with his father, Sir John, a director on many of the proposed new railways, who, consequently, allotted a considerable number of shares in each to Mr. Armitage and his aspiring son; and then Geoffrey sought the assistance of Mr. Needham, and through his agents turned most of these shares into money, and trafficked again and again with the accumulated funds. Let but the "oracle" of the day grace an advertisement with his name, all men rushed to purchase shares which he approved of, and Geoffrey's money was turned over many times in buying and selling, always to advantage, what had obtained a fictitious value from the prestige alluded to above.

But his advantage ended not here; nothing seemed too ridiculous for the gulls of the day; he even disposed of his father's long-hoarded shares in the "Puddle-cum-Squash" line, which seemed now likely to be a follower of the once ridiculed Chat Moss. Nothing was too reckless for the possessors of unlimited scrip; and of this Edward Averill afforded an extraordinary illustration, as he one evening hastily entered Geoffrey's room.

"Here, Geof," he cried, pulling out a quantity of papers from his pocket, and thrusting them into his hat, "I know you have a fancy for this sort of thing; I am wretchedly in want of cash; my father cannot supply me just at present, but he has given me a lot of scrip for some of the new lines allowed last session. Look here! old fellow—what will you say for the hatful?"\*

The strange bargain was soon concluded, by which Geoffrey, at the expense of a few pounds, relieved his friend's pressing necessities, and became the possessor of the paper representatives of thousands sterling, and in a short period turned some of them into solid and substantial gold.

The quiet little village of Nestlebury had not entirely escaped the general contagion. Independently of the squire's participation therein for his son's sake, and the "lion's share" appropriated by the county member, Sir John Averill, for his own, several of the more lowly inhabitants caught the infection, and even the respected "Principal" of Birchindale Academy, as his Irish assistant path-

\* A fact.

tically informed Mr. Belford, "could not refrain from slightly dabbling in the rushing stream, whereby the worthy doctor had sadly *burnt his fingers*." But, fortunately, Uncle William was able to resist the temptation to thrust his own hand into the supposed hot water, and was truly thankful that neither by means or opportunity could his beloved Percival be exposed to such a danger.

Mr. Armitage often walked down to the cottage, to detail the success which had already attended Geoffrey's plans, and to try and shake what he called his neighbour's "prejudices" against joining in the capital chances now presented of augmenting his little property; but in vain.

"It cannot always be a winning game, my friend," was the reasonable reply; "some one must lose, and it might chance to be myself amongst the number. Besides, depend upon it, England is not to be cut up into 'direct lines,' and 'branch lines,' and 'amalgamation lines,' as you provisional committee-men would have us simple folk believe, or it will present an appearance on the map such as our states used to do, Squire, when we were boys, and played at 'French and English' together."

"And even if it did so," was the rejoinder of the eager advocate, "private and individual feeling should not be allowed to interfere with public advantage. If parties are offered a fair remunerative price for their land, they ought to be compelled to take it, when it is required for the use of a legitimate and profitable line. I have been perfectly disgusted with the opposition shown by some of the petty landowners."

"It may be all very well for you to argue thus, Squire," returned his less interested opponent, "who have only of late years become the owner of the Manor House at Nestlebury, which, if you were called on to resign for 'a consideration,' would involve no sacrifice of hereditary feelings; but there is much to be said in palliation of the opposition you self-constituted directors meet with sometimes from the ancient owners of the land. There are scenes and spots connected with the memories of great men, and famous deeds, which could never be paid for by mere money; and even the more humble homes which have sheltered the infancy, nurtured the youth, and now form the sanctuary of the age of their possessors, are almost too hallowed in their associations to be lightly made the subject of barter. Grant something also to the recollections of the past. The peer shrinks from the destruction of his ancestral park, with its records of historical splendour, and royal privileges; the yeoman dreads the demolition of his homestead, which would sweep away the fond remembrance and the cherished memorials of those who for many generations tilled the land he now inherits. Yes, yes, Squire," he continued, carried away by his local enthusiasm, "there are places in this our native land that it would grieve the most indifferent to destroy; judge, then, what must be the feelings of those who have always lived therein, and whose only hope is that they may be permitted to die in the same place which saw their birth."

As the mania increased, so did the Squire's arguments in its favour, and the steady refusal of

Mr. Belford to jeopardize the small patrimony he had so long retained.

"Think of Percy," urged Mr. Armitage.

"The very thing I do," was the calm reply; "and I will not risk losing what I have always considered his rightful property when I am dead. I do not envy those who are pressing on in this mad race. If it were an honest enterprise I would not thus speak against it; but it is not. Ay, you may frown, Squire, and hold up your hand; but I repeat it, and whether successful or unlucky, I say the present speculation in railway shares is foolish, false, and vicious, for it is a greedy pursuit of gain by unjustifiable means."

"How mean you?" interrogated Mr. Armitage, rather testily, as if the insinuation touched him personally.

"Simply this," replied his friend, "that every man commits dishonesty, who, in the hope of receiving advantage, engages himself in responsibilities which he cannot meet if the die should fall on the losing side."

The Squire's brow cleared. "We have not done so," he said emphatically. "Whatever Geoffrey and I have put our names down for, we can and will meet honourably, and I would not urge you, neighbour Belford, beyond that point."

"Urge it not at all, Squire Armitage; my sister and I have hitherto contrived to live on our small income, and we can do so still; and after all," he added smiling:—

"The richest man, whatever his lot,  
Is he who's content with what he's got."

At length the crash came; the high-raised pile of hope and expectation toppled to the ground; poverty and despair were the gaunt inmates of many a once happy home; yet from this strange wild wreck "Geoffrey the Genius" came forth triumphant and unscathed, and brought golden spoils as trophies of his cleverness. What mattered it to the youthful speculator that his gain had brought his neighbours loss? What recked he that the bursting of the noxious bubble which he, and such as he, had helped to swell, drew tears of agony from the widow's heart, or dried up the last resources of a struggling husband and father? He would not own that it had been throughout a race of over-reaching cunning against reckless inexperience—of blind credulity against wide-awake covetousness. He called it by far different names, and the success of this high flight of his "genius" only confirmed his resolve to soar again whenever such a bright prize was suspended in the sky of "legitimate speculation."

"Now, father, what think you of my success?" was his exulting query, when Mr. Armitage came to town soon after. "I am getting on pretty quickly in my ascent to Fortune's glittering temple, wherein I hope you will live to see me permanently installed, and share in your son's prosperity."

There was one spot in Geoffrey's heart which the mildew of worldliness had not yet touched, and that was his filial love for his father, which seemed more than usually strong from the death of his mother, when Jessie was born, having thrown him

at an early age more completely on the care and affection of his remaining parent. In all Geoffrey's schemes for the future, his father bore a part; in all his visions of wealth and importance, his father was to share; and, still in the vigour of middle age, with neither chronic nor hereditary disease to sap the bodily strength, or cast a shadow on the intellect, Mr. Armitage might well listen with hope and pleasure to his son's prognostications.

The veil which covers the future was woven in mercy as well as wisdom; for even a prosperous career of months or years would be overshadowed with gloom and anxiety, if the lowering cloud of the future could be seen moving onward to extinguish its brightness and its joy; and hope and energy would cease to be exerted, if one saw beforehand that impulse and action alike would be in vain. It is not only rash and presumptuous to wish to rend that kindly veil asunder, for, if permitted, it would make this world a scene of misery, confusion, and despair.

Mr. Armitage returned home well satisfied with his son's prospects and progress; he had passed an evening with "old Nat Needham," who was loud in his applause of Geoffrey's cleverness, and at times offensively lively over the narration of transactions in which they had both gained advantage over less wide-awake individuals. As Geoffrey unfolded his morning paper, the first announcement in the obituary, which met his view, was—"Yesterday, at his villa at Highgate, from an apopleptic seizure, Nathaniel Needham, Esq., in the 69th year of his age."

What a practical lesson on the mutability of human riches and human plans did this brief notice read the young pupil of the deceased speculator! It saddened him for a time; but the impression soon wore off under the excitement of business, aided by the eulogistic paragraphs in more than one newspaper, wherein the perseverance, energy, and unyielding resolution of this gentleman were proved satisfactorily to have been crowned with the success and prosperity they had so well deserved. This posthumous but doubtful praise proved a stimulus and incentive to Geoffrey's own besetting sin.

#### THE PLEBS OF ROME.

THE interest now felt in all Italian affairs induces us to give the substance of a paper by the lively French writer, M. About, upon the class of Romans known as the Plebs, or the masses, as they are called among us.

Most of the foreigners who visit Rome know but little of the class we refer to. They can remember being harassed by crowds of "roaring vagabonds," and being pestered by untiring beggars, whose cry of "give, give," was incessant. But behind this curtain of mendicity are hidden a hundred thousand persons almost as poor, though not so idle, and who work hard to gain what is in their case literally their daily bread. The gardeners and vine-dressers who cultivate the land in the suburbs of Rome, the workmen, the servants, the cab-drivers, the models, the costermongers, and that

class, so numerous in all large cities, the honest vagabond who trusts to Providence or a turn in the lottery for the means of getting a meal, compose the majority of the population. These people find it difficult to subsist even in the winter, when rich foreigners abound in Rome; their condition is therefore hard indeed in the summer, when Rome is empty. Many of these are too proud to ask an alms, but none of them are too proud to accept it if offered. "Ignorant and curious, *naïve* and subtle, commonly most prudent yet capable of the greatest imprudences; extreme in devotedness and hatred, easily moved, difficult to convince; more open to sentiments than ideas; sober from habit, yet terrible in their drunkenness; sincere in the practice of the most exaggerated devotion, but as prompt to quarrel with their saint as with a man; convinced that they have little to hope in this world, and comforted from time to time with the hope of a better, they live in a state of resignation, barring a little occasional grumbling, under a paternal government that gives them bread, when it has got any." The social inequalities, which are more apparent in Rome than in any other city, does not excite hatred. They congratulate themselves that there are rich people, because this gives benefactors to the poor. They are less capable than any other people of governing themselves, and are therefore easily swayed by agitators, whom they will follow in the blindest manner. Many among them, during the revolutionary period, fought without having the faintest conception what they were fighting for. So little did they believe in the Republic, that in the absence of all the authorities, when the pope and the sacred college had taken refuge at Gaëta, a large number of families encamped in the house of Cardinal Antonelli without doing the least damage. The restoration of the pope by means of a foreign army did not seem to surprise them; on the contrary, they seemed to rejoice that public tranquillity was once again restored. They don't often quarrel with the French soldiers; and when this does happen, it is on account of the interference of the latter in their domestic arrangements, and not from political causes; and they don't care a straw about the foreign occupation, except when they are personally affected by it.

They pride themselves on being descended in a direct line from the people of ancient Rome, and it may readily be admitted that this pretension is not without foundation. They are great devourers of bread, probably because they can get nothing better; and are fond of theatres and shows; they treat their wives like persons in whom they have no confidence, leaving no money at their disposal, but laying it all out themselves. Every man of them is the client of a client of a patrician. They are robust and well-built, but not one of them will work if he can live without it. When they are without a halfpenny, they work, and work well too, but it is almost impossible to get them to do anything when they have any money in their pocket. They are a kind-hearted race, and possess great simplicity; but they are entirely convinced that they are superior to all the rest of mankind. They are perfect misers in one sense, stinting themselves



of almost everything, until an opportunity offers itself for disbursing their savings in a manner which shall produce a striking effect. If one of them can manage to scrape together in the course of a year, about ten crowns, he will get rid of it all at once in hiring a prince's box at the opera, at the carnival, or in showing himself in a carriage at the fête of "Divine Love," as it is termed. It is thus that the populace of Rome forget both the past and the future in saturnalia. The hereditary improvidence which characterizes them is explained by the uncertainty of their resources, the periodical recurrence of times when there is no work to be had, and the impossibility of attaining, without the assistance almost of a miracle, to a superior condition. They are devoid of several virtues, and, among others, of probity; this last virtue formed no part either of the virtues of their ancestors; but they are not devoid of good-breeding and self-respect. You rarely hear them indulge in blackguard language. That class of individuals who are here commonly designated as the lowest of the low is unknown in Rome.

A very numerous class in Rome and the suburbs are the mendicant friars. These men are, perhaps, on the whole, the most hardworking portion of the population. They extract teeth, serve as models for painters, follow the funeral cortège of a distinguished individual, with wax-candle in hand, and, in short, do anything which can earn a little money for their convent. It is in the suburbs of Rome, however, that the mendicant friar has the hardest lot. Instead of receiving money, he is obliged to receive alms in kind, and he has to carry the load he thus collects in the manner so humorously depicted in the "Ingoldsby Legends;" but it takes him a much longer time to make the collection.

Mendicity is, and it must be owned, naturally enough, a flourishing institution in Rome. It cannot be interdicted, nor indeed checked in any way, since it is a perpetual stimulant to the exercise of one of the three cardinal virtues. Ever since the foundation of the Romish church, there has been full toleration for all sorts of appeals to charity. The most offensive displays with a view to incite that feeling are allowed, and the Romans, rich and poor, give largely, partly, no doubt, from motives of vanity, but chiefly from their inherent kind-heartedness.

Of all the mendicants that swarm in the streets of Rome, most assuredly none are so honest and useful as the "begging brothers." They are humble and devoted servants of the great; the intimate and familiar friends of the small. The people listen to them because they are of the people. They preach in the open places and streets, in language which is decidedly vulgar, and never hesitate at giving energy to their rhetoric by the use of the strongest word which occurs to them. "We are not learned," said one of them; "we are not strong on the subjects of telegraphing, gas, or steam, but we know enough to give good advice."

Travellers who visit Rome make a point of going to the open space in front of the Farnese Palace, admiring its imposing mass, and the beautiful fountains which play in front of its façade; but

the time when this is seen to the most advantage is on a Sunday morning. Here, on that day, those who have their labour to dispose of assemble, as at one of our statute fairs, and the farmers and cultivators come to hire them. The labourers of the environs also assemble here to renew their stock of provisions. They enter the city at break of day, after having walked a good part of the night. Each family has an ass, for the purpose of carrying the baggage, and they establish themselves on the space we have mentioned; the shops in the neighbourhood being allowed, by a special privilege, to be kept open till mid-day. Here you may see them bustling about in all directions, while some of them are crouching down in out-of-the-way corners, counting their copper money, the asses standing patiently beside the fountains. The women, with their picturesque costumes, attract particular attention, from the elegance and grace of their attitudes. The men wear the long mantle, generally of a sky-blue, and the pointed hats rendered familiar to us by the Italian bandits of the opera, but often patched in such a manner, and with cloth of so many colours, that it is difficult to detect that which forms the ground. The broad-brimmed straw mostly supersedes the pointed hat in summer. As regards the feet, they are protected by boots, shoes, or sandals.

Along the wall, in the open air, five or six straw chairs are placed, which serve as shops for as many barbers: here a week's beard may be taken off for a coin of somewhat less value than a half-penny, and it is done, too, in good style. After the operation, there is a choice of fountains for the individual to wash in; but you will generally observe that he contents himself with wiping his face on the back of his cuff as he walks away.

Alternating with the barbers are the public writers, whose functions are identical with our scribes of the olden time. Those who have received letters, which they don't know how to read, carry them to the scrivener, who first reads the letter aloud, and then answers it; and for the double operation, considers himself fairly remunerated by something less than three-halfpence. It is amusing to see the cool matter-of-course way in which individuals gather round one of these scribes when he is writing from the dictation of a customer, in order to hear what is said; and so little do they entertain an idea that they are guilty of an indiscretion, that they freely comment upon what is said, and offer suggestions as to what it would be best to say: "You ought to say this," one would remark. "No," another would reply, "it is better to say—". And perhaps a third would exclaim, "Let the man alone; surely he knows better than you what he wants to write."

Among this crowd circulates a few vehicles laden with cakes, made of barley or Indian meal; peripatetic lemonade venders, whose lemonade is certainly fresh, for the vender squeezes the juice from the lemon into the glass, and fills it up with water. A great many of the crowd are unable to afford this luxury, and content themselves with the water they can obtain at the fountain, the brims of their hats serving as a medium to con-

duct the water from the fountains into their mouths. Piles of bits of meat, the refuse of the kitchens, occasionally tempt the frugal prodigal Roman to invest a halfpenny in the purchase of a handful, which is given to him in a piece of an old newspaper; but even in such a small matter as this, there is a good deal of bargaining, not with respect to the price—for that is hardly susceptible of diminution—but for a few bits more, which the purchaser eventually takes from the heap; and this may be taken as a specimen of the manner in which all mercantile transactions are conducted in Rome. Passing from group to group are numbers of mendicant monks, who beg for money on behalf of the souls in purgatory.

Now and then an improvisatore may be met with, who is regaling his audience with a tale; but the tale has nothing in it half so interesting to the observer as the profound attention with which the listeners drink in his words. Here you have the secret of the ease with which the political agitators can lead them on to almost any undertaking.

Your attention is called off from the story-teller by the sound of music. Now music is not so common in the streets of Rome as it is here, so you rush off to hear what it is, and probably find that it is performed by a one-eyed violinist and a blind guitar-player, assisted in the vocal department by an old woman. The noise they make is considerable, but there is nothing musical in it. You buy the "complaint," which you observe bears the mark indicative of its being printed by authority, and in all probability you find the heading to run in this wise "Tragic Event which happened in Burgundy. Taken from the History of Marguerite, Queen of the said City." It is scarcely necessary to add, that the history is no other than that which has been so often related under the title of the "Tower of Nesle;" but those who believe that Florence is in England because Englishmen come from Florence, who ask you which is largest, London or England, have no difficulty in persuading themselves that Marguerite was queen of a city named Burgundy, and that it was only last year her husband strangled her.

"I once saw," says M. About, "a peasant, between forty and fifty years of age, standing beside a stall, down whose face the tears were rolling in streams, without his uttering a word, or attempting to wipe them off, and close to him were three or four other peasants, who were trying to comfort him to the best of their ability. He held in his hand an open letter. I walked up to him, and asked him what was the matter; but he stared stupidly at me, and made no reply; upon which one of his neighbours said, 'He has received a letter from his mother.'

"Well!"

"She tells him she is dead."

"Stupid! How can she be dead when she writes?"

"Oh, sir!" said the afflicted individual, "it is all the same. Read this."

"He held out his letter to me, and I took it and read it aloud, slowly, for it was badly written, and the orthography was far from correct, but written in a style and with a resignation which savoured

strongly of the antique. The poor fellow, who had had the letter read to him by one of the public letter-writers, repeated each word after me with a quiet but deep affliction, the tears all the time streaming down his face. The letter ran as follows:—

"My son,—I write these lines to tell you that I have received the viaticum and extreme unction. Hasten, therefore, to return here, that I may see thee once more before I die. If you tarry long, you will find the house no longer contains me. I salute you affectionately, and send you my maternal blessing."

"I returned the letter, and at the same time slipped a crown into his hand, but he was too much absorbed in grief to appear even conscious of it."

The report of the gun at Fort St. Angelo, announcing midday, is the signal for all this busy motley crowd to take their *siesta*; they don't go far to do this, but each family lies down on the spot where it may happen to be, so that the open place of which we have spoken is covered with what, at a casual glance, appears sundry heaps of coloured rags. The barbers and the public writers begin to fold their arms; the drinking shops gradually lose their customers; the bakers' shops, which have been full all the morning, become empty, and silence succeeds to the hubbub which existed an hour previously.

#### THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF WINDSOR.



ETON COLLEGE.

We have no space to devote to the formal history of Eton. The early notices of the town are very scanty, and only such as thorough-going antiquaries would care to collect. The mention of a couple of mills in Domesday Book, a charter for a market, grants of tolls, commissions of inclosure, and such dry material, may be well left for the examination of some remote "leisure hour," when all interesting memorials of the neighbourhood shall be fully exhausted. The college is the one object of picturesque beauty, and it alone gathers round it historical associations of value. On a summer's noon, as seen from the North Terrace, rising above

the trees, bathed in golden sunshine, it is one of those graceful forms of architecture which fixes itself at once in the imagination. Nor will the lines of Grey, however hackneyed, fail to give pensive pleasure as they recur to the memory:—

"Ye distant spires, ye antique towers  
That crown the watery glade,  
Where grateful science still adores  
Her Henry's holy shade.  
And ye that from the stately brow  
Of Windsor's heights, the expanse below,  
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,  
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among,  
Wanders the hoary Thames along  
Its silver winding way.

"Ah, happy hills! ah, pleasing shade!  
Ah, fields beloved in vain!  
Where once my careless childhood stray'd,  
A stranger yet to pain!  
I feel the gales that from ye blow  
A momentary bliss bestow,  
As waving fresh their gladsome wing,  
My weary soul they seem to soothe,  
And redolent of joy and youth,  
To breathe a second spring."

And no one who rambles round the courts of Eton College, ascends the queer old staircase to the long sleeping-room, peeps into that granary-like apartment with its rows of beds, visits the chapel, examines the library, wanders in the cloisters, or loiters in the playing-fields, will be likely soon to lose the impressions he will thus derive of one of the grandest old schools in England. Should he approach the time-stained gateway out of school-hours, and see troops of fine-looking boys of every age and size rushing out to play; should he watch them running round the trees, or leaning on the walls, buying cakes and oranges of those well-known venders of such luxuries, who eagerly await the hour when school-work is suspended; should he follow them in the green fields, amidst oaks and elms, to see them wielding the bat and hurling the ball; or, should he walk on to the bridge and see them rushing into their boats, and handling their oars with all the vigour, and feathering them with all the grace, of practised jack tars; if he has a heart that sympathises with the energetic joyfulness of boyhood, he will feel no small amount of pleasure at the sight of so many happy faces; and if he has the feelings of an Englishman, he will be gladdened to think that these robust and genial youngsters—so full of daring, so ready for endurance, and so workful in their pleasures—are to be amongst the soldiers and sailors and statesmen of the next generation.

Eton has within its walls a curious kind of album. Many and many a boy who has afterwards become an illustrious man, has cut his name upon the forms and benches, or scratched it on the plaster. As we have stood and looked on them, deciphering the oddly-marked characters, shades of the departed, some very grand and august, have passed before us, and we have felt that we do not envy people whose sensibilities are unawakened by mementoes of the mighty dead; who have no ears to hear, and no language in which to speak to them; who are untouched by the joy or the sadness, the peace or the strife, the work or the warfare, the achievements or the failures, of those who have crossed before us

over the broad fields of human life, and left behind them the deep footprints of their path. Not a few of those Eton boys, in notching their names with a sharp knife on a plank of wood, were mechanically rehearsing—albeit with little consciousness of doing so—the deeper moral impressions they were to make in after days upon a nation's mind. Strange emotions have boys felt when, as old men, they have revisited the school and playing-fields; and we have heard that Wellington regarded his youthful games as the discipline which prepared him for his manhood, and that he used to say, *Waterloo was won at Eton.*

But we must not, in shunning dry archaeological research, plunge into a disquisition about the training at our public schools, because that will send us wide of our mark, and tempt us to point out blemishes as well as excellences; so back we come to historical pathways. Eton Montem has now become a history; we have seen it more than once, and of all gay scenes connected with our youth, that was certainly amongst the gayest. How the bright sunshine used to usher in the day! In what bravery of velvet and silk and broad cloth and gold-lace did the *oppidans* come out! How very, very smart were the uniforms of captain and marshal! How smart, too, the whole host of the young undistinguished—obliged to be satisfied with blue jackets and white trousers! How calm, but determined, the demand for salt by the gay bag-bearers, who stationed themselves by the toll-gate on Eton bridge, where we remember seeing them stop the carriage of King William and Queen Adelaide, to receive the accustomed tribute! How grand the procession was all around the quadrangle, and then through the gateway, up the Slough Road to Salt Hill, where the graceful waving of the flag, amidst shouts of applause, concluded the ceremony. And then came the uncereemonious proceedings in Botham's Gardens, and finally the walks up and down the play-fields in the evening, with somewhat damaged attire on the part of the chief heroes—now happier than ever in the smiles of papa and mamma and loving sisters.

Now we shall go into no critical inquiry about the origin of Montem, however tempted to do so; but in the sentences which are to follow touching Eton College and town, with a forbearance most virtuous in an archæologist, confine ourselves to the poetical and the picturesque. Of course we think of Sir Henry Wotton, the provost of Eton and the friend of Isaac Walton, who has embalmed the worthy in his matchless "Lives." There they are sitting in the library, looking into old black-letter books, or, after an abstemious repast, having a quaint and quiet chat about angling or higher themes, as on a summer evening they look out of the window on the green field and the noble trees. And early on a spring morning, there they go, attired in angler's gear, with rods and lines, and landing-nets and worm-cans, and all the other appurtenances of the gentle craft, to the river-side down to Black Pots, where they fish and listen to the birds and wisely and lovingly talk together.

Going farther back than Wotton's time, we light



WINDSOR, FROM THE LONG WALK.

on the following passage from Hentzner's Journal, a foreigner who visited England in 1598.

"In the precincts of Windsor," says Paul Hentzner, "on the other side the Thames, both whose banks are joined by a bridge of wood, is Eaton, a well-built college. As we returned to our inn, we happened to meet some country people celebrating harvest home. Their last load of corn they crown with flowers, having besides an image richly dressed, by which perhaps they would signify Ceres; this they keep moving about, while men and women, men and maid-servants, riding through the streets in the cart, shout as loud as they can, till they arrive at the barn. The farmers here do not bind up their corn in sheaves, as they do with us, but directly as they have reaped or mowed it, put it into carts, and convey it into barns."

Very pleasant imagery that. To us much more so than the gorgeous doings when Elizabeth passed through Eton, and the boys presented addresses, and called her "the rose, and the light without which the earth would perish;" and talked of her being Venus-like in beauty, Juno-like in majesty, Minerva-like in wisdom, and other such nonsense. A fainter picture we have in more distant time. In 1509 Philip of Castile visited Windsor—"all the childrene of Eaton," we are told, "standing along the barres of the chorche-yard."

We have thus sidled back, in something like awkward crab fashion, from the modern to the ancient—a mode of writing history which we have

sometimes thought possesses peculiar advantages, and is specially philosophical, because it traces effects to their cause, and is emphatically *à posteriori*. Where annalists end their story, we find ourselves at the beginning.

Eton College was founded by the pious munificence of Henry VI. The charter of foundation is dated 1441, and the school is designated "the Kynge's College, of our Lady by Etone, besyde Wyndesore." We shall not weary thee, gentle reader, with extracts from the documents, nor from the builder's accounts, tempting though they be, with entries about sand and chalk, flints and bushels of oyster shells, timber and stone. We shall not describe how the work went on, how provost and fellows were chosen, and how they met and worshipped in the building before it was finished, and how alms-houses were built, and the boys were at length gathered; but we cannot resist the temptation to insert the following little bit out of an old MS.: "When King Henry met some of the students in Windsor Castle, whither they sometimes used to go to visit the king's servants, whom they knew, on ascertaining who they were, he admonished them to follow the path of virtue, and besides his words, would give them money to win over their good-will, saying to them, 'Be good boys, be gentle and docile, and servants of the Lord.'"

Some of the pleasantest hours of our lives have been spent in Eton and its neighbourhood. There was the walk to Datchet, now carried across the



lower home park through a noble avenue, haunted by memories of the fat knight, who, in the muddy ditch at Datchet Mead, was shot out of the basket "hissing hot," into the water, "where, with a kind of alacrity in sinking, he had been drowned, but that the shore was shelvy and shallow." And there were rambles through green lanes from Datchet to Upton, passing by a fairy-looking cottage with a goodly lawn and a pool of water, and drooping willows in front. And there was Upton church, once ruinous but now restored, with its ivy-clad steeple, which vies with Stoke in its claim to the allusion by Gray of the "ivy-mantled tower, where the owl does unto the moon complain." Crossing by what is now Upton Park, we have many a time paused by the old-fashioned straggling brick house, above which the famous telescope, aspiring to the heavens, used to indicate the abode of the great astronomer Herschell. We remember, in the



HERSCHELL'S HOUSE, SLOUGH.

old coaching days, once stopping before the unpretending entrance, to receive inside the vehicle the son of the great discoverer, the present illustrious Sir John, and then being honoured with a three-hours' chat, to town, such as was common in a jog-trot stage, but is rare in the flying railway train. And going somewhat a-field on the other side, Slough—then how different from what it is at present—we loved to ride or ramble to Stoke church-yard, and think of Gray and his mother. Close by there is the mansion of Mr. Granville Penn, with a piece of the tree under which his ancestor, the Quaker founder of Pennsylvania, formed his treaty with the Indians. The estate has now passed into the hands of Mr. Labouchere. Farther on, you reach Burnham Common and Beeches, one of the noblest collections of trees in England, where Burke used to meditate, and which Gray thus describes:—"I have at the distance of half a mile, through a green lane, a forest, (the vulgar call it a common,) all my own; at least as good as so, for I spy no living thing in it but myself. It is a chaos of mountains and precipices; mountains, it is true, that do not ascend much above the clouds, nor are the declivities quite so

amazing as Dover Cliff; but just such hills as people who love their necks as well as I do may venture to climb, and crags that give the eye as much pleasure as if they were more dangerous. Both vale and hill are covered with most venerable beeches, and other very reverend vegetables, that, like most other ancient people, are always dreaming out their old stories to the winds;

"And as they bow their hoary tops, relate  
In murmuring sounds the dark decrees of fate;  
While visions, as poetic eyes avow,  
Cling to each leaf, and swarm on every bough."

At the foot of one of these I squats me, (*il penseroso*;) and there I grow to the trunk for a whole morning; the timorous hare and sportive squirrel gambol around me, like Adam, in Paradise before he had an Eve; but I think he did not use to read 'Virgil,' as I commonly do there."



STOKE POGIS CHURCH.

Stoke Pogis is worthy of being visited for its own rural beauty, as well as for its memorials of Gray. The picturesque church, with its "ivy-mantled tower," and the churchyard, with its "yew trees' shade," its "rugged elms," and the quiet tombs, beneath which "the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep," remain much as they were when the poet wrote the Elegy. The "shapeless sculptures" are there, upon which his eyes may have rested, and many a holy text is still strewn around,

"To teach the rustic moralist to die."

Here are a few specimens of the epitaphs upon the graves of some of the village worthies,

"Their names, their years, spelt by th' unlettered muse:—"

"Lo, the poor crieth, and the Lord heareth, and saveth him out of all his troubles. The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ear is ever open to his cry. In memory of — —."

On another we read:—

"Though here in earth my body lies,  
Yet sure as death the same will rise  
As for my soul, let none take thought,  
It is with Him who has it bought;  
For God on me doth mercy take,  
For nothing else but Jesus' sake."

And on a third, Mr. James Taylor, a contemporary of Gray, leaves the following poetical legacy:—

"Farewell, vain world, I have known enough of thee,  
I know not what thou canst say of me;  
What faults you have seen in me take care to shun,  
And look at home, there is something to be done."

On a slight eminence, commanding a fine view of Windsor and Eton, a monument was erected in 1799, in memory of "the great lyric and elegiac poet," the inscription bearing that "he died in 1771, and lies unnoticed in the churchyard adjoining, under the tombstone on which he piously and affectionately recorded the interment of his aunt and lamented mother." In that tomb, which is seen in our engraving, "sleep the remains of Dorothy Gray, widow, the careful, tender mother of many children, one of whom alone had the misfortune to survive her." A more recent inscription under the adjoining window runs thus:—"Opposite to this stone, in the same tomb upon which he has so feelingly recorded his grief at the loss of a beloved parent, are deposited the remains of the author of the Elegy."

"Hark, how the sacred calm that breathes around,  
Bids every fierce, tumultuous passion cease;  
In still small accents whispering from the ground,  
A grateful earnest of eternal peace!"

#### METHODISM IN THE PEAK.—JOHN WESLEY'S FIRST LOVE.

THE opening pages of the Life of Dr. Bunting\* present some singularly interesting pictures of the early history of that revival of spiritual religion a century ago, of which the system of Methodism was one of the fruits. In the following extracts appear the names of several of the distinguished founders of that system. The account of John Wesley's first love is also a remarkable episode in a life which had more than the ordinary share of matrimonial troubles.

"In 1745, the young Pretender marched across the county of Derby, expecting, on his route to the metropolis, to receive the homage of the aristocracy of England. But the rustics, who stared at the strange sight of an invading army, were soon freed from fear. Within a week, they watched its wild retreat, and the failure of the last attempt to force the fortunes of the house of Stuart.

"During the year just named, my grandfather, William Bunting, was born at Monyash, a small village of grey stone, which, with its old church set in lime trees, lies sleepily in a hollow, near the road by which the traveller passes from Buxton to Newhaven. My grandmother, Mary Redfern, was then a child, five years old, at Upper Haddon, some three miles distant.

"It was very soon after her birth that the first Methodist preachers began their mission in the Peak. Wesley had sent them, not so much to the masses, already partially supplied with Christian ordinances, as to those 'who needed them most,' and on many a broad parish, and into many a dark hamlet, throughout the land, the doctrine of a

personal, happy, and active religion flashed as with the brightness of a new revelation from heaven. In this 'age of great cities,' let not the claims of the few and destitute be forgotten—of the plain, impressible country-folk, who still form the strength and staple of the English people. Such was one of the latest counsels bequeathed by Jabez Bunting to his successors in the work of Methodism.

"David Taylor, Lady Huntingdon's butler, whom she had sent to itinerate through Leicestershire, extended his labours into the adjoining counties. During a considerable period, he preached in Sheffield; and, while there, John Bennet, of Chingley, in Derbyshire, a young man of good education, but of unsettled habits, who had come to enter a horse for the races, went, with a friend, to hear what the preacher might say. The sermon did not produce any impression on him; but he followed his companion into the vestry; for mere courtesy's sake, asked Taylor to come and see his parents; and was not a little annoyed when the invitation was eagerly accepted. He did not wish to be teased about religion; and he knew that Dr. Clegg, the minister of the family, though a dissenter, disliked all irregular movements. So he did all he could to get rid of the engagement. But the Methodist preacher was not to be thwarted; and, after a ludicrous game of hide-and-seek, succeeded in paying his unwelcome visit. Within a short time, Bennet was a zealous apostle of Methodism. In 1743, he became formally connected with Wesley. 'Many doors,' he writes, in 1750, 'are open for preaching in these parts, but cannot be supplied for want of preachers. My circuit is one hundred and fifty miles in two weeks, during which time I preach thirty-four times, besides meeting the societies, and visiting the sick.' Derbyshire, Lancashire, and Cheshire were the principal scenes of these arduous labours.

"One sermon by John Bennet wrought great wonders. Soon after he became a preacher, Thomas Bennett, an inhabitant of Chelmsorton, two miles from Monyash, spoke of him to some young men of his acquaintance. 'When I was a young man,' said he, 'the "Puritans" came and preached at Townend,' (the principal house of the village,) 'and the people were much affected by them. There is a man called John Bennet who preaches much in the same way; and the people are affected under him in the same manner: and, if you will get your father's barn, I will invite him over.' John Bennet came and preached accordingly; and the father and his four sons, together with a man named Lomas, received the truth. All were steady and active Methodists to their lives' end. John Marsden, the eldest of the brothers, became a friend and an adviser of Wesley; and settled in London, principally that he might be near him. 'If there be a Methodist in England,' said Wesley, 'it is John Marsden of London.' Men on 'Change marked his sober air; and a caricature of the leading cotton-dealers in the metropolis portrays him as bending his knees in prayer. The late John Thornton, of Clapham,—Richard Cecil tells the story,—wishing that a man so steady should extend his business,

\* The Life of Jabez Bunting, D.D. By his son Percival Bunting, Vol. I. Longman & Co.

offered to lend him ten thousand pounds on his personal security; but he declined to accept the kindness, because he feared that new cares might ruffle the stillness of his spirit. 'There is nothing,' he said on his death-bed, 'betwixt me and the kingdom of heaven.'

"John Bennet either adopted what are called Calvinistic tenets, or found out that he already held them; separated himself from Wesley and his societies; and became the minister of an independent church in Cheshire. And here the tale of his useful life might end, but for one memorable event. Grace Murray, a widow residing at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, young, beautiful, and well-educated, was one of Wesley's own converts. He appointed her to be the matron of the Orphan-house in that town. Subsequently, at his request, she proceeded through the northern counties to meet and regulate the classes of female Methodists. Like other itinerants of those days, she travelled on horseback. An old man once told how he saw her take her leave at a house-door in Yorkshire. Her horse stood waiting. She came out. A glance of her eye quickly told her all was right. No man might touch, even to help, her, for she was on God's errand; so she laid her hand upon the conscious beast, and it knelt to receive her. She sprang lightly into the saddle, waved her arm, and, as in a moment, was out of sight; and the old man saw her no more—except in dreams.

"I do not know whether Wesley ever saw her set out on a journey; but none will venerate his memory the less that he would fain have married her. Charles Wesley, however, and George Whitefield were opposed to his marrying at all. John Bennet had once been sick of a fever, and she had waited upon him; and, 'from that period,' he thought that 'she was given to him for a wife.' Now he came, not unwillingly, to the rescue, and, without any communication with Wesley, realized his impression. Wesley poured out the sorrows of his heart in a long strain of passionate verse. Nearly thirty years after her husband's death, Wesley, who, it is said, had never mentioned her since the marriage, went, at her own request, to see her. He never named her again. She died at Chapel-en-le-Frith, Derbyshire, in 1803; and my father preached her funeral sermon on Psalm xxvii. 13, 14.

"The day before she died,'—I quote from a manuscript, which he read after his sermon,—'she raised herself into a very solemn attitude, and, with most striking emphasis, delivered, in the following language, her dying testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus:—I here declare it before you that I have looked on the right hand and on the left,—I have cast my eyes before and behind,—to see if there was any possible way of salvation but by the Son of God; and I am fully satisfied there is not. No; none on earth, nor all the angels in heaven, could have wrought out salvation for such a sinner. None but God himself, taking our nature upon him, and doing all that the holy law required, could have procured pardon for me, a sinner. He has wrought out salvation for me, and I know that I shall enjoy it for ever.'"

## NEW CURIOSITIES OF LITERATURE.

## GREAT READERS AND NON-READERS.

"Books," says an American writer, "are the best of things, well used; abused, among the worst. What is the right use? What is the one end which all means go to effect? They are for nothing but to inspire. I had better never see a book than to be wrapped by its attraction clean out of my own orbit, and made a satellite instead of a system."

Shelley was always reading; at his meals a book lay by his side, on the table, open. Tea and toast were often neglected, his author seldom; his mutton and potatoes might grow cold, his interest in a work never cooled. He invariably sallied forth book in hand, reading to himself, if he were alone; if he had a companion, reading aloud. He took a volume to bed with him, and read as long as his candle lasted; he then slept until it was light, and he recommenced reading at the early dawn.

During the latter years of his life, Hazlitt laboured under a total incapacity of reading any work, however brief, consecutively and completely. He had spent, he used to say, the first half of his life doing nothing but read, and it was hard if he might not employ the remainder in turning his reading to account. He was accustomed to say, too, that after he began to write, reading became a task instead of an enjoyment. "I am certain," says Mr. Pasmore, "that of many works that he has reviewed, he never read one tithe part; and even what he did read was not the most characteristic portion, or that best calculated to afford ground for a fortunate guess. No wonder, then, that his 'Spirit of the Age' should be disfigured by such a copious mixture of false criticism and personal prejudice."

"Reading is to the mind," said the Duke of Vivonne to Louis xiv, "what your partridges are to my chops." "Reading is," says Gibbon, "the nourishment of the mind; for by reading we know our Creator, his works, ourselves chiefly, and our fellow-creatures. But this nourishment is easily converted into poison. Salmasius had read as much as Grotius, perhaps more; but their different modes of reading made the one an enlightened philosopher, and the other a pedant, puffed up with a useless erudition." The following passage, from the fourth book of "Paradise Regained," is applicable to many "great readers:"—

"Who reads  
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not  
A spirit and judgment equal or superior,  
(And what he brings what needs he elsewhere seek?)  
Uncertain and unsettled still remains;  
Deep versed in books, and shallow in himself,  
Crude or intemperate, collecting toys  
And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge,  
As children gathering pebbles on the shore."

It was a favourite saying of Hobbes, "the philosopher of Malmesbury," "that, if he had read as much as others, he might have been as ignorant."

Descartes was another of the non-reading philosophers, who avoided books lest they might stand

between him and nature. "I study men," he says, "intensely, without a book."

Radcliffe, when a student at the University, had so few books that Dr. Bathurst, the President of Trinity, once on a visit to him in his rooms, asked him where was his library? "There, sir," said Radcliffe, pointing to some glass vials, a herbal, and a skeleton; "there, sir, is Radcliffe's library." He ultimately became the Abernethy of his day.

These men feared that reading might prevent them from thinking, and that they might enslave their understandings to those whose opinions they studied. Wordsworth's hint was not intended for such as these—

"Up, up! my friend, and quit your books, or surely you'll grow double!"

It was for such men as M. Huet, who busied himself so constantly about his books, that he was scarcely ever to be spoken to. A countryman, who had repeatedly applied for an audience, at length one day, when he received the usual answer that the bishop was in his library, and could not be disturbed, exclaimed, that he wished the king would send them a bishop who had finished his studies.

Some of these non-readers have so unenviable a notoriety as "freethinkers," in the bad sense of the word, that it would have been well had they obtained from books an acquaintance with the first principles of sound knowledge. The greatest minds are always ready to be humble learners from others, while smaller ones are apt to swell with an undue sense of their own independence.

#### EARLY RISING.

Many authors have written in favour of early rising, and a few of them have practised it. In 1784, Benjamin Franklin published a very ingenious essay on the advantages of early rising as a mere piece of economy. Byron says—

"And so all ye, who would be in the right  
In health and purse, begin your day to date  
From day-break."

The plan of going to bed early and rising betimes has been called the golden rule for the attainment of health and long life. Henry Vaughan, in his "Silex Scintillans, or Sacred Poems," sought to enforce the precept in these words:—

"Far day sullies flowers:  
Rise to prevent the sun: sleep doth sins glut."

And Dr. Cheyne, in his "Essay on Health and Long Life," gives it as his opinion, that "nothing can be more prejudicial to tender constitutions, studious and contemplative persons, than lying long in bed, lolling and soaking in sheets, after one is distinctly awake, or has slept a due and reasonable time."

Sir Thomas More rose at four in the morning; Milton left his bed about the same hour; so did Bishop Burnet, the historian. Sir Matthew Hale, when a student, was a very early riser. Dr. Parkhurst rose at five o'clock all the year round. Archdeacon Paley and Dr. Priestly recommended and adopted the practice during the greatest portion of their lives. Dr. Burney wrote the musical articles of the enlarged edition of Chambers's

"Cyclopædia," and, to fulfil his engagement, generally rose at five or six o'clock every morning, although he was then in his seventy-sixth year. Dr. Williams once asked Dr. Abraham Rees how, amidst his numerous avocations, he found time for the compilation of so vast a work as his "Cyclopædia?" He replied, "By rising early." John Wesley, the founder of the Methodists, who had studied the art of healing, wrote a sermon on the advantages derivable from it. Buffon, the celebrated French naturalist, was an early riser, but, like many others, he was so only by having enforced the habit. "In my youth," he says, "I was very fond of sleep; it robbed me of a great deal of my time; but my poor Joseph (his attendant) was of great service in enabling me to overcome it. I promised to give him a crown every time that he would make me get up at six. Next morning he did not fail to wake me and to torment me, but he only received abuse. The following morning he did the same, with no better success. During the day, I told him he ought to think of my promise, and not mind any threats. The next time he employed force. I begged for indulgence—I bid him begone—I stormed—but Joseph persisted. I was therefore obliged to comply, and he was rewarded every day for the abuse which he suffered at the moment when I was awakened, by thanks, accompanied by the crown. Yes; I am indebted to Joseph for ten or a dozen of the volumes of my works."

For early rising William Cobbett had an absolute passion, and some of the poetry that we trace in his writings, whenever he speaks of scenery or of rural objects, broke out in his method of training his children into his own matutinal habits. "The boy," says Mary Russell Mitford, in the account of a visit to Cobbett's home, in her "Recollections of a Literary Life," "the boy who was first down-stairs was called the lark for the day, and had, amongst other indulgences, the pretty privilege of making his mother's nosegay, and that of any lady visitors."

That eccentric but acute scholar, Hardouin, was an early riser, as we learn from the following anecdote. When a sober contemporary once reproached him for his excessive addiction to extravagant and startling paradoxes, and was exhorting him to abstain from them in future, he answered suddenly, "Do you suppose, my good friend, that I rise every morning, both summer and winter, at four, to write commonplace remarks?"

#### HOMES OF TASTE.

A WELL known American writer has drawn a beautiful portrait of a Christian merchant, devoting his income, after deducting personal and household expenses, to the happiness of his fellow creatures and the advancement of religion. He pictures him aiding the poor by judicious benefactions, assisting young men in their education, secretly relieving meritorious families that have sustained reverses, and attesting by liberal donations his sympathy with all great Christian movements. Describing



his mansion he adds: "I censure not the works of art I find there; I dare not say these sculptures and paintings are prohibited indulgences, and should have no place there. Still less should I presume to say, why is not this needless conservatory sold and given to the poor? The proprietor of this mansion has, in my opinion, (after consulting with due liberality the higher claims named above,) a right to indulge in these elegant tastes."

To those who agree with this reasoning, a volume that was lately published, entitled "*Rustic Adornments for Homes of Taste*,"\* may be safely recommended. It is a charming catalogue of the various innocent modes in which a home may have transferred to its interior, some of that beauty with which the works of God in nature fill every rightly constituted mind. Written in a sunny agreeable vein, and tintured with a cheerful and healthy philosophy, the volume is one which well deserves perusal. The subjoined passage is a good specimen of the author's style, and of the mode in which he pleads that we should have in our homes something to serve us with a hint

"That Nature lives; that sight-refreshing green  
Is still the livery she delights to wear."

"Among the emblems of our nationality, not one is more strongly cherished by us than our HOME. We pride ourselves on the strength and healthiness of our domestic life, and we challenge the world to produce an example of a people more fondly attached to their native soil, or in whom the fireside affections have a broader development, or a higher aim. We cherish the chimney corner where we first were blest by parental kisses, and through 'the aisles of memory' its ruddy glow shines on our grey hairs, and warms our hearts as we hurry to the grave. At any period of life there is, with the majority of us, no dearer object of recollection than remembered scenes of the home wherein we first lisped 'Our Father,' and no more hopeful subject of speculation and conjecture than the home we have or are yet building up, in which to teach that same simple prayer to children of our own.

"It is because we are truly a domestic people, dearly attached to our land of green pastures, and shrubby hedgerows, and grey old woods, that we remain calm amid the strife that besets the states around us, proud of our ancient liberties, our progressing intelligence, and our ever-expanding material resources. Those resources daily multiply the means of exalting our social life, and invention keeps pace with the demands of an improving civilization; so that while

'The thoughts of men are widened by  
The progress of the suns,'

the facilities for calm and healthy enjoyment increase with the growth of more elevated desires. The 'Home of Taste' is one of the latest fruits of the high tone to which social life has attained in this country of late years, and its complete development may not be so far off, but that the present generation may witness the union of nature and art in the ministration of human sympathies within doors.

\* London: Groombridge & Sons.

"We know already that the luxuries of refinement are no longer monopolized by the great, that the merchant is not rendered sordid by commerce, but that he can delight in the strength of Angelo and the grace of Raphael; the ledger does not dwarf the trader's soul below the appreciation of Titian's lights or Rembrandt's shadows; and the persevering plodder, who from four to six does battle with armies of statistics, can retire to his suburban villa to rejoice in the midst of his family, or fondle his tame birds with the affection of a child. The fact is, that the aboriginal nature can never be drummed out of us, let visionaries say what they may; through all circumstances of life, let the whirl of excitement be never so rapid, or the stupor of despondency never so profound, that which ministers to our delicate perceptions of beauty, grace, and truth, serves at once as rest, and solace, and refreshment. Therefore we build up homes of taste wherein to find anchorage when life becomes a hurricane, and where, secure from the jar and dust that prevail without, we may cherish the affections that lie deepest in our nature, and from which spring the noblest and most enduring results.

"A home of taste is a tasteful home, wherein everything is a reflection of refined thoughts and chaste desires. It is a school of the heart, in which human sympathies teach profounder lessons than are found in books, and the ornaments of walls and windows suggest a thousand modes of being cheaply happy. In such a home, beauty presides over the education of the sentiments, and while the intellect is ripened by the many means which exist for the acquisition of knowledge, the moral nature is refined by those silent appeals of nature and of art which are the foundation of taste. If taste is an application to nature of the same faculty which in morals enables us to distinguish between right and wrong, then the beautiful is the highest form, or rather the embodiment of the purest ethics; and to be in constant communication with it, drawing our inspirations from its most palpable phenomena, is to place our spiritual natures under the guidance of a goddess who cannot lead them wrong. No matter in what form the cultivation of taste may manifest itself—in paintings and sculptures, in the analysis of scenery, in the grouping of flowers, in the embellishment of the window or the mantel, in the cultivation of criticism, and the appreciation of what is true and beautiful in art generally—refinement of manners, kindliness of feelings, and a deeper devotion of religion will be its sure attendants. We cannot come into the presence of any work of high-class art without at the instant experiencing motions that increase our happiness, nor can we take interest in the simplest pursuit of a leisure hour, without at once passing into an atmosphere of higher moral purity than we are compelled to breathe at other times, amid

'The weariness, the fever, and the fret,'

that, without such an antidote, harden the heart by degrees, and allow the inner life to be but half developed. Such 'enchancements are medicinal; they sober and heal us. They are plain pleasures, kindly and native to us.'

"But the home of taste is not necessarily the result of a lavish expenditure; the most humble may command it. Though the several rustic adornments treated of in this work admit of extension, commensurate with the most liberal outlay, there is not one but is in some measure attainable by those who have but little leisure and most narrow means; and some indeed may be, and have been, cultivated most successfully by those who could not aspire even to the ordinary luxuries of middle life. In the adornment of home, it does not require a fortune to set up a vase of flowers, or an aquarium, or a stand of bees that shall sing to their master all day long, and entrap every spare moment of leisure he may be able to afford to 'shepherd them.' He who lays out his garden in accordance with correct principles of taste, may find in it as much amusement, and as genuine a solace from the cark and care of life, as if it were a domain of thousands of acres—perhaps more so, for it is his own work, it represents his own idea, it is a part of himself, and hence redolent of heart-ease.

"It is an error common to writers to believe that the special subject on which the pen is engaged is of pre-eminent importance; and perhaps I may be yielding to this common weakness when I suggest that the rustic adornments of the household embrace the highest of its attractions apart from the love which lights the walls within. The pleasures of the garden, the tending and taming of household pets, the culture of choice plants in the greenhouse and the window, seem to me much more remunerative, both intellectually and morally, than even the study of the higher departments of art, because they keep us nearer to nature, and compel us to be students of the great out-door world, whence our noblest inspirations and most humanizing teachings are drawn. 'It seems as if the day was not wholly profane, in which we have given heed to some natural object.'

"It would be an anomaly to find a student of nature addicted to the vices that cast so many dark shadows on our social life; nor do I remember among the sad annals of criminal history, one instance of a naturalist who became a criminal, or of a single gardener who has been hanged. But not to apply so severe a test, is it not true that the most genial natures are of the most homely sort, attached to the fireside; cultivators of rustic taste in some form or other; given to simple hobbies that keep the attention fixed on things that breathe purity, and quiet, and peace; they are healthy folks, healthy in mind as well as in body, and to clear perceptions add the impulses of generous hearts.

"In a certain sense, the home is the outside of a man; it is an external vesture, and a visible embodiment of his mental character. The man of intellect and taste will impress on everything about him an air of usefulness or elegance, and will make the best of the roughest materials that may be cast in his path. Architecture—the highest of the domestic arts—springs out of the common desire of the mind to dwell in a fair exterior, and in this, as in other of the useful arts, elegance, comfort,

and convenience usually go hand in hand; and while deformity is invariably more expensive in every sense than grace, so the well-built and tastefully-adorned mansion more readily meets our domestic requirements, and in accordance with our station, affords proper scope for embellishment within and without. Sir Henry Wotton says, 'Architecture can want no commendation where there are noble men and noble minds;' and it is not to be doubted that if ordinary residences were constructed in accordance with correct principles of taste, the dwellers in them would attain a higher status in mind and morals, for the character is powerfully impressed for good or evil by what surrounds it permanently. Why should the eye be compelled to gaze on ugly lines and awkward angles, false proportions and abominations intended as ornaments, when symmetry is at all times cheap, and accuracy of form the most useful and convenient? If builders were not blockheads, we should read art-lessons in the streets, instead of perpetually deploring the daily violation, in bricks and mortar, of every law which should control domestic architecture.

"Lord Bacon gives the text on this point when he says, 'Every man's proper mansion, house, and home, being the theater of his hospitality, the seat of his self-fruition, the comfortablest part of his own life, the noolest of his sonne's inheritance, a kind of private principedom—nay, to the possessors thereof, an epitome of the whole world—may well deserve, by these attributes, according to the degree of the master, to be decently and delightfully adorned.'

"Wealth is certainly a blessing when it is made the instrument of increasing human happiness, and in the gratification of a love of rural elegance money is certainly a powerful instrument. Still the home of taste is within the reach of all; the spiritual life may give a radiance to a cottage, while the noblest productions of genius may even contribute to the gloom of the mansion, where moral and religious worth are strangers. Whatsoever we look upon reflects our own mood, we see ourselves perpetually, as if all nature and art were but repetitions of a mirror.

'Our sleeping visions, waking dreams,  
Receive their shape and hue from what  
Surrounds our life.'

Where the counsels of wisdom preside over parental love, where those 'whom God has united' remain in unity under the bonds of a beautiful affection, than which

'All other pleasures are not worth its pains;'

where woman appears in her true gentleness, and the children grow up in the love of parents and the fear of God, there is a home of taste, a home of virtue, of mental discipline, a home of moral worth, and domestic affection and religious aspiration. 'Round it all the muses sing;' everything within takes the semblance of the souls that preside over it; the simplest things acquire grace and meaning; vulgarity, meanness, and vice dare not cross the threshold; ennui cannot find its way there, petulance is smiled out of countenance, and temper is rebuked by little ruddy faces and curly heads of

hair, and eyes that sparkle with enjoyment. There are pictures and vases, and stands of living flowers, that fill the mind with a sense of the exhaustlessness of form and colour; there are household pets that daily teach us we may rule by love and not by fear; there are gatherings of all kinds from the world of art and the world of nature, that demand attention, and call for the exercise of skill, every one of which represents an idea, and sets us thinking; while every labour they require brings its high reward in the gratification of the desire which possesses us. But above all, there is the ripe domestic life which forms the true centre of this circle of adornments, heightened by them in its ever-growing appreciation of what is good in man and beautiful in nature. Who then would not have a home of taste? If you have it already, dear reader, prize it, and continually strive to make it more and more perfect; if not, 'reform your *pleasure bills*,' and see how you can snatch a little time and a little money from pursuits that are unprofitable, to bestow in the embellishment, perhaps in the creation, of a little terrestrial paradise.

'Domestic happiness, thou only, bliss  
Of Paradise, thou hast survived the fall!'

Thou art the nurse of virtue; in thine arms  
She smiles, appearing, as in truth she is,  
Heaven-born, and destined to the skies again.  
Thou art not known where pleasure is adored,  
That reeling goddess, with the zoneless waist  
And wandering eyes, still leaning on the arm  
Of novelty, her fickle, frail support;  
For thou art meek and constant, hating change,  
And finding in the calm of truth-tried love,  
Joys that her stormy raptures never yield."

COWPER.

### MY FIRST LAW-SUIT.

I AM naturally a peaceable man. I repeat it emphatically, I am a man of peace. Disputes and contentions of all kinds are hateful to me. Phrenologists have examined my head, and find not a trace of the organ of combativeness. On the contrary, those bumps are maturely developed which denote brotherly love and kindness. I trust I have obtained, from higher than natural sources, a meek and quiet spirit. When misunderstandings do arise, I can sacrifice much for the sake of peace, and am ever ready for an amicable adjustment of differences. Conceive, then, gentle reader, my discomfort and dismay when I find myself actually engaged in a lawsuit! Yes, I who abhor the very idea of litigation, and dread the sight of a lawyer, am an unwilling captive in the meshes of the men of wig and parchment! Bear with me, then, while I briefly narrate this little episode in my life's hitherto uneventful career.

Timpkins was my neighbour and friend. Our tastes were cast in the same mould, and many a time and oft have we effected transactions of a pecuniary nature to our mutual satisfaction and advantage. Horses, guns, furniture, and articles of bigotry and virtue, (as the lady of a certain millionaire used to call them, alluding to articles of *bijouterie* and *vertu*,) we have dealt in with friendly facility.

Circumstances rendered it advisable for me to

leave the seclusion of my rustic abode, and I resolved to dispose of my charming villa, with its weeping willow, its plaster cast statuary, its vases of classic mould, its smooth gravelled walk, measuring (from its tortuous sinuosities) full fifteen yards in length, its daisied lawn, and flower parterre, and to betake myself to the more turbulent but convenient region of streets and squares.

Friend Timpkins, strange to say, was not overwhelmed with sorrow at my resolution. He had even been coveting my miniature country seat, with its snug library, and its cheerful conservatory, illuminated with coloured glass of every hue. He was frank enough to tell me so. Willing to gratify my dearest friend, we at once came to terms, and settled the matter amicably (as I fondly supposed), in a few minutes, after dinner.

"Should he pay the money there and then? Would I have it in cash or in government securities?"

"Anything for a quiet life," I meekly replied.

"Very good," said he; "it will be necessary to get some legal friend to prepare the requisite papers—a mere form, which will save any possible difference hereafter."

"A mere form, eh?" I said, with a long-drawn sigh. I saw it all. The edge of the wedge let in! Ah, well—a mere form. Be it so. Everything seemed to be *en règle* when I bought the property, and I was satisfied that the new conveyance would be "a mere matter of form."

No sooner was Timpkins gone than I began to repent me of having sold the villa; for sold it was to all intents and purposes. My dreams that night were of black-robed gentry in fuzzy wigs stamping on my chest, and prodding me with "flaws" and "title deeds," and shouting in triumph over their unoffending victim, till I woke and heard a gentle tap and soft voice at my chamber door, announcing that my hot water and boots were there.

These dreams foreshadowed coming events. "A flaw in the title deeds" boomed like a gong in my too expectant ears, though the blandest smile of my legal adviser indicated a pleasant correctness and a most satisfactory account of the proceedings in "this little transaction." Thenceforth peace and tranquillity vanished from my hearth. The irritation was kept up by my becoming the almost diurnal recipient of certain tragic-looking missives of a faint blue tinge, garnished with monstrous seals, and enriched with a superfluity of verbiage. These awful apparitions, painfully expressive of sums already due for expenses incurred, were bidding fair to rival in amount the full value of my pretty villa. At last, as the complexities increased, I was served with notice of action. Timpkins no longer met me with friendly greeting. When I spoke to him on the subject, he said curtly that the matter was "in the hands of his lawyer."

At length the meekness and submissiveness of my nature rebelled. Flesh and blood could stand it no longer. I determined to elicit, in an interview with the professional adjuster of my case, some reply which might at once and for ever declare to me my fate.

With anxious steps I traced my way to the con-

finer of Lincoln's Inn, but the rapidity of my movements brought me to the rendezvous before the appointed hour. Preferring to meditate during the intervening period in the open air, to the joys of a hard seat in a dismal ante-chamber, I walked up Chancery Lane into Holborn. The tumultuous bustle of that crowded thoroughfare was not favourable to reflection; so, crossing the way, I sought quietude by turning into a bye-street rejoicing in the euphonious and alliterative appellation of Leather Lane.

Into Leather Lane, then, were my steps beguiled; but even in this modest outlet from the great highway my cogitations were set at naught. A thundering brewer's dray monopolized the whole road, and with projecting barrels invading the pavement, left the alternative of annihilation or speedy flight. To the latter I resigned myself, and turned with the purpose of ignominious retreat, when the small door of a shop offered the pleasurable prospect of escape from immediate danger for myself, though to the jeopardy of many fragile articles, through the rapidity of my intrusion.

I found myself in a sculptor's shop, where, with the exception of a narrow strip of passage, the whole area was filled with plaster casts of the most beautiful works of art. I soon became absorbed with the sight, and all thoughts of the villa, of Timpkins, and our immediate griefs, vanished. My thoughts were elevated, and my temper sweetened, in beholding the statues of heroes and statesmen, and innumerable forms of beauty and gracefulness.

Lauding the skill of the Italian artist who could produce such exquisite copies of classic sculptures at so trifling a cost, and indulging in a brief season of delight while inhaling an atmosphere of art, I pictured to myself the sculptor modelling into form the creations of his genius, and elaborating from the ductile clay only forms of artistic beauty, while rejecting all subjects that spoke of this world's woes and this world's wrongs; when, lo! what

should I see? A bas relief, whereon is depicted my own individual case of torment! The sculptor must have known my state, and I was impelled, by the terrific rumble of the brewer's wheels, to invade these premises for the special purpose of seeing Timpkins and myself imaged and sculptured. As pen may fail to impart a truthful idea of what was presented to my gaze, the pencil has been brought to bear in the pleasing task.

As a work of art, it cannot be recognised as of a high order, but there is humour and truthfulness in the representation. Look at the discomfited opponents, each striving to lay claim to his property, while, with an air of disinterestedness, with suavity of manner, and no indecorous haste in his proceedings, the man of law is appropriating to himself the entire produce from the lacteal organization of the object under consideration.

Who does not remember a somewhat singular representation of the suffering litigants, when the legal arbiter, coolly swallowing the bivalve fish, exclaims—

"A shell for thee, and a shell for thee,  
The oyster is the lawyer's fee!"

But here is a new rendering, and a better one. The process of milking is one that can be continued intermittingly, until no more of the nourishing fluid is obtainable. Such will be the result of the so-called "litigious process" between Timpkins and myself!

Thus recalled to the sad reality of my position, I bethought me of my appointment with my lawyer; but I found that the hour had long since gone by, and I knew that he had by this time set out on a journey which would keep him absent from town.

I am still, therefore, ignorant of my fate. Meanwhile, I have carried off the bas relief in triumph, believing that its ludicrous truthfulness will bring about immediate reconciliation between Timpkins and myself, and not without a faint hope that the sight of it may induce the lawyers to hasten the adjustment of the case to our mutual satisfaction.

